

Renewal Recipient

Reference
Manual

Cal Grant

4000



CALIFORNIA
STUDENT AID
COMMISSION

Dear Cal Grant Recipient,

On behalf of the California Student Aid Commission, let me congratulate you on renewing your Cal Grant award! I understand how hard you are working as I, too, used a Cal Grant to get a college degree. Your diligent work to attain your degree is admirable.

I am sending you this booklet so you can learn about your Cal Grant and the simple actions you must take to maintain your Cal Grant eligibility. For example, let's say you move and your address changes. You must let the Commission know right away. Then the Commission will be able to continue to send you information about your Grant.

If you have questions that this booklet doesn't address, it's best to talk with your financial aid advisor. The Commission works as a partner with your school and your advisor to get you the most current financial aid information available.

I wish you every success in college as you realize your dream of attaining a college education.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diana Fuentes-Michel".

Diana Fuentes-Michel
Executive Director
California Student Aid Commission

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Taking Care of Your Cal Grant

Your Cal Grant has been renewed and here are some important things that you should know. It is essential that you read and understand the information and policies outlined in this booklet. Failure to follow these procedures could result in your grant being withdrawn. In addition to that, you may need to pay back any Cal Grant funds that you have already received. If you have questions regarding any procedures or policies outlined in this manual, please contact the Commission (see back cover).

As a Cal Grant recipient, you may receive the equivalent of four years of full-time grant payments. The total amount of time you are eligible to receive payment is called your “program eligibility.” “Program eligibility” or the number of academic terms that you may receive payment, is based on your year in college (e.g. freshman, sophomore) at the time you receive your first Cal Grant award payment. Thus, if you were first paid as a second or third year student, you will not receive four years of payment.

Your program eligibility is reduced each term for which the Commission records a payment on your behalf. Regardless of your amount of program eligibility, you must meet all other financial, academic, and program requirements to receive Cal Grant payments.

For your privacy and protection, the Commission will not release any information on Cal Grant program participants 18 years of age and older to anyone, other than to participating schools, without the written consent of the participant.

Renewing Your Cal Grant

Near the end of each school year, a Cal Grant Renewal letter, which indicates either your eligibility to renew your award or announces the end of your eligibility, is sent to you. If you are renewing a Cal Grant award, you must show financial need of at least \$100 for the renewal year. You do not need to submit another verified Cal Grant Grade Point Average (GPA), or GPA Verification Form to the Commission.

To renew your award for next year (the 2005-06 school year), you must continuously maintain your current eligibility throughout the 2004-05 year; file a 2005-06 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) listing your school of attendance; and, have remaining Cal Grant eligibility. To be eligible for a renewed award, all 2004-05 terms must be accounted for, either by your having received payment or by your filing a leave of absence request with the Commission. The terms must be reported by September 30, 2005 or your Cal Grant will be withdrawn.

“Unable to Determine” Process

You will receive an “Unable to Determine” letter if the Commission has not received information from you or your school about your 2003-04 Cal Grant by June 30, 2005. Your letter will list which term or terms are incomplete. You must respond to the letter by September 30, 2005, or your Cal Grant will be withdrawn. Please check with your financial aid advisor or the Commission if you have questions.

Cal Grant A California Community College (CCC) Reserve

If you have a Cal Grant A CCC Reserve Award, your award is automatically renewed. Your award will be held in reserve for you for up to two years and will be available for use when you transfer to a tuition/fee-charging school. After you transfer, be sure to let your school know that you have a Cal Grant reserved for you.

Cal Grant C

If you have a Cal Grant C award, your grant will be automatically renewed as long as you continue to meet eligibility criteria and have not used all of your grant.

If you are a current Cal Grant C recipient and want to apply for a 2005-06 Cal Grant A or B award instead, you must submit a letter to the Commission requesting your withdrawal from the Cal Grant C program by January 1, 2005. You must then file both a 2005-06 FAFSA and a verified GPA by the March 2, 2005, postmark deadline. Your request for withdrawal may be mailed to the Commission address located on the back of this booklet.

Other Kinds of Financial Aid

Any time you receive a financial aid award, you should notify your financial aid advisor right away. Your advisor must include all your awards to create the best financial aid package for you. Cal Grants can only be used to pay the amount of tuition and fees not covered by any other tuition/fee-only award(s). If your combined awards reduce your estimated need, your Cal Grant award may be reduced or withdrawn.

Additional Program Benefits

Cal Grant recipients are eligible for benefits up to a maximum of four years with two exceptions: fifth year benefits and teaching credential benefits.

Fifth Year Benefits

Cal Grant recipients who enroll in a mandatory five-year undergraduate program (such as architecture or engineering) that requires participants to complete more than four years of undergraduate study may request an additional year of Cal Grant payment. In order to receive these benefits you must submit a *Request for Cal Grant Fifth Year Benefits Form (G-42)*. The G-42 lists approved fifth-year programs and is available from your campus financial aid office or the Commission Web site at www.csac.ca.gov ; click on *Publications*, then *G-42*. Additionally, you must file a FAFSA listing your school as a recipient of the information. If your request is approved, this will enable your school to determine your grant renewal eligibility.

Teaching Credential Benefits

Renewal recipients who have received a bachelor's degree and plan to enroll in a teacher preparation program at an institution approved by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing may receive up to one additional academic year of Cal Grant payment.

You may request this benefit by submitting a *Request for Cal Grant Teaching Credential Program Benefits Form (G-44)*, which is available from your school's financial aid office or the Commission's Web site www.csac.ca.gov. Additionally, you must enroll in an approved teaching credential program within 15 months of receiving a bachelor's degree or exhausting your

four-year Cal Grant benefits. Payment of your grant is subject to your school's verification that you are enrolled in an approved teaching credential program on at least a half-time basis. Cal Grant TCP funds are paid toward approved teacher credentialing courses only.

If you have applied for and/or received your preliminary teaching credential, you are not eligible to apply for a Cal Grant.

Additional financial aid is available for students pursuing teaching careers through the Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE). For further information, call (888)224-7268, press 3.

Making Changes

School Change

Your school must participate in the Cal Grant program in order for you to retain your award so be sure the school you are changing to is listed on your federal Student Aid Report (SAR). You must notify the Commission as soon as possible if you change schools so that the Commission can determine if your school participates in the Cal grant program.

Remember, your financial need will be reevaluated if you change your school choice. If your expenses are reduced due to a change, your grant may be reduced or withdrawn. When notifying the Commission of a school change, state the effective date of the change and whether you will live on-campus, off-campus, or with parents or relatives.

Name or Address Change

Please immediately notify the Commission if your name or address changes, or differs, from that on any Commission correspondence you receive.

Social Security Number Change

You must notify the Commission if the Social Security number printed on any Commission correspondence is not correct. Complete the enclosed Recipient Change Form and submit it with a copy of your Social Security card to the Commission.

Financial Status Change

If your financial circumstances have changed since you filed your FAFSA, or you believe you have special financial circumstances which may affect your eligibility, contact the financial aid office on the campus that you plan to attend in the fall. If appropriate, your campus financial aid office can submit financial changes on a *Grant Record Change Form for Schools* (G-21), and submit it to the Commission no later than September 30, 2004. Your school is also required to report any situations, or changes, that may result in the reduction or withdrawal of your award.

Less Than Half Time

If your college enrollment falls below half time at any time, you must inform the Commission immediately. (Refer to the Leave of Absence section on page 14 of this manual).

Withdrawing Your Cal Grant Award

If you wish to withdraw your Cal Grant, use the *Recipient Change Form* enclosed with your renewal letter. Remember however, that your withdrawal discontinues your Cal Grant offer and is irrevocable. If you give up your grant, you can compete as a new applicant in future years. Contact the Commission if you have any questions about withdrawing your award.

Payments and More

Delivery of Funds

You must notify your school financial aid office of your Cal Grant award. Cal Grant funds are paid on a term-by-term basis and the Commission will only disburse Cal Grant funds directly to your school. The actual amount of your Cal Grant will be determined by your financial aid advisor, based upon your total financial aid package.

Summer School Payment

Payment for non-mandatory summer coursework (July-August 2005) for all grant recipients is available. You must be enrolled at least half time to be eligible for summer payment. Payment must be specifically requested from the Commission in writing before the end of your summer term. Your request should include your name, address, Social Security number, the name of the school you will be attending, and your housing arrangements. You may request summer 2005 payment after March 1, 2005. Your school should request payment by August 31, 2005.

Summer Cal Grant payment amounts are based on the regular school year grant and may not be sufficient to meet all of your summer tuition/fee charges.

It is important to note that summer payments will reduce your total program eligibility for Cal Grant benefits. If you take the summer payment option, you may not have enough remaining Cal Grant benefits to assist you during your fourth year of college. Be sure to consult with your financial aid advisor to maximize the use of your Cal Grant.

Leave of Absence

If you are not enrolled at least half time for any term, you must request a leave of absence from the Cal Grant program. A leave may be requested in writing or by filing a *Grant Record Change Form for Students* (G-10). The G-10 can be obtained from your school's financial aid office, the Commission, or by downloading it from the Commission's Web site at www.csac.ca.gov. You may also ask your school to report a leave of absence on your behalf. However, it is your responsibility to make sure that the Commission has been informed of your leave. Total leave time may not exceed one academic year, as defined by your school. Extensions may be granted for exceptional situations on an appeal basis only. You must follow the Commission's appeal process to request an extension for exceptional situations.

Military Deferment

If you are on active duty in the United States Armed Forces or Coast Guard, you may have your Cal Grant deferred for up to three years. Please request this deferment from the Commission using the *Deferment Request Form* (G-12), which is available on the Commission's Web site. Talk with your financial aid advisor about your other financial aid awards.

Default on a Student Loan?

California law prohibits the payment of Cal Grants to any individual who 1) fails to repay a federal or state grant, if required, and 2) previously defaulted on a student loan and has not made satisfactory repayment arrangements. If you believe you are in either of these situations, you are required to report this information to your financial aid advisor. If at anytime it is determined that you owe a grant refund to the federal

government or the Commission or are in default of a loan, and have not made satisfactory payment arrangements, your Cal Grant will be withdrawn.

Filing an Appeal

If you object to the status of your Cal Grant, including the withdrawal of your grant, you must submit a written request prior to any deadline indicated on the correspondence you received. The Commission will review your file and send you a written response. Please send your written request to the appeal address indicated on the back of this manual. Because of the sensitive nature of appeals and Internet security concerns, the Commission does not accept appeals submitted by email.

Appeals regarding changes to your financial situation should be submitted to your school financial aid advisor. Since schools verify your family's income and asset information, they must report financial changes to the Commission via the *Grant Record Change Form for Schools* (G-10). The Commission will not consider any financial change requests received directly from a student.

In support of the Governor's Executive Order D-10-99, the California Student Aid Commission reminds all Cal Grant recipients that it is illegal and unlawful to pirate computer software and other intellectual property. As such, the Commission shall take the necessary controls, deemed appropriate by the State of California, to ensure that State funds are not used to acquire, operate, or maintain computer software in violation of applicable copyright laws.

How Do I Contact the Commission?

To better assist you, please include your name, Social Security number, address, and phone number on all correspondence. When sending mail to the Commission, be sure to obtain a \$0.90 United States (U.S.) Postal Service Certificate of Mailing, so you can verify mailing the correspondence by the appropriate deadline.

General Correspondence and Appeals

California Student Aid Commission
Grant Programs Customer Service
P.O. Box 419027
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9027

Forms and Student Status Changes

California Student Aid Commission
Grant Programs Processing Section
P.O. Box 419028
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9028

If you change your permanent mailing address, you must immediately inform the Commission's Grant Programs Processing Section. The Commission is not responsible for mail not received by you. Please have your mail forwarded if you are away from your permanent address.

Internet Access

www.csac.ca.gov
E-mail: custsvcs@csac.ca.gov

Telephone and Fax

(916) 526-7590 or Toll-free (888) 224-7268
FAX (916) 526-8002

Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:50 p.m., Thursday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:50 p.m.